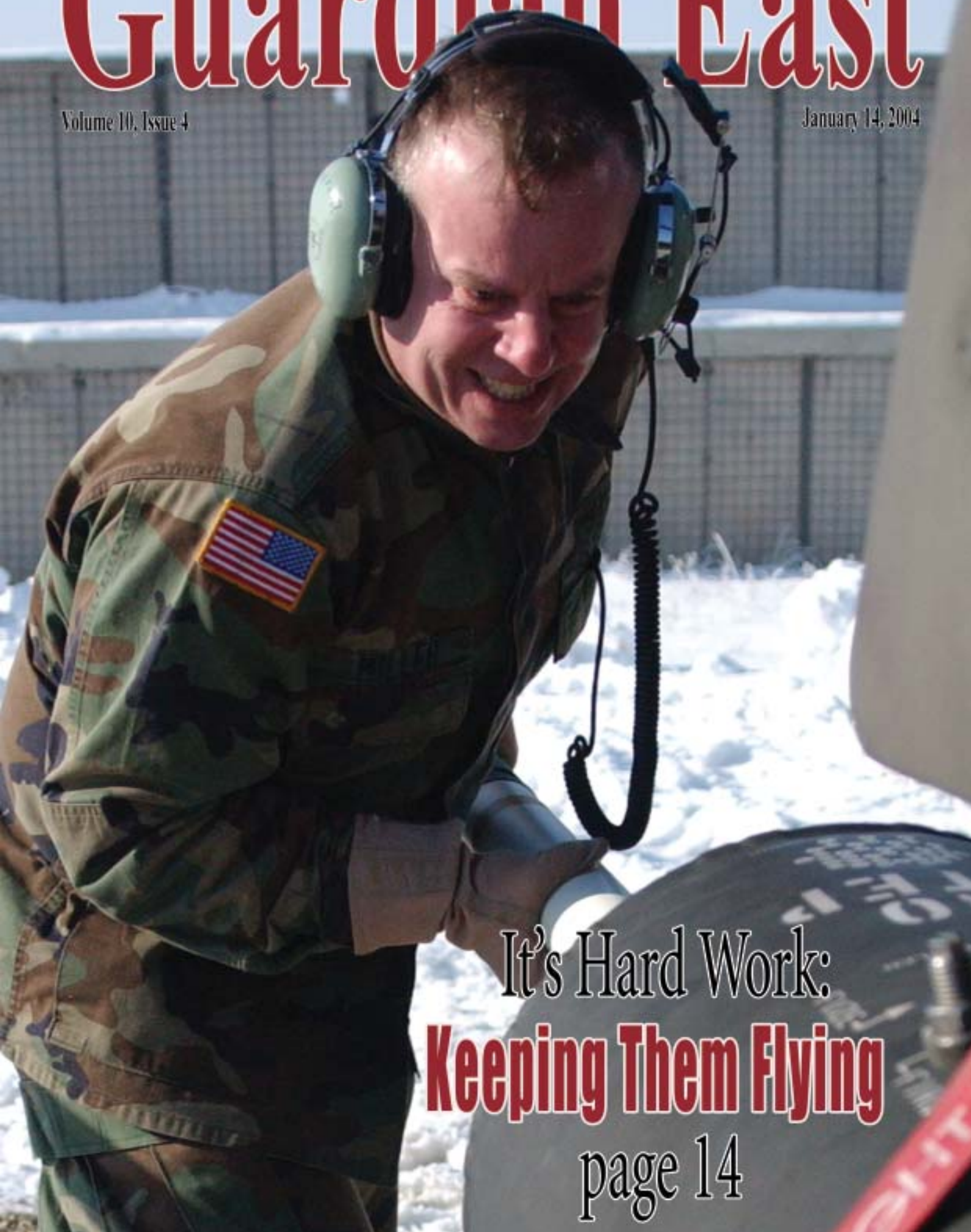


Produced For Personnel of KFOR Multi-National Brigade (East)

Guardian East

Volume 10, Issue 4

January 14, 2004



It's Hard Work:
Keeping Them Flying
page 14

Message to the troops



By Lt. Col. Allen Ponsini
Commander-
Task Force Associators

I'd like to begin by stating how proud I am of the entire Task Force Associator community. Community is not typically a word used to describe a military organization, but it truly describes the relationships and interactions that have developed between Task Force Associator and the personnel who are assigned to, or operate from, Camp Monteith and the associated AOR.

From its inception, TF Associator was established as a true combined arms Task Force comprising units and troops assigned from varied locations throughout Pennsylvania. The 1-111th was the core, and we were honored to enhance and strengthen the Task Force with troops from the 337th Engineers and the 1-110th Infantry (our Bradley troops). We were then rounded out and pleased to receive

Soldiers from the 1-112th, 2-112th, and DIVARTY. Each of these respective units and their Soldiers have done exemplary work and are the keys to Task Force Associator's success.

It became evident during train-up that Task Force Associator would require assistance in order to truly focus on mission accomplishment. The inclusion of our General Support assets that operate within our sector and assist in running Camp Monteith were the final invaluable members to join the Task Force Associator community. Each member of this community contributes to the Task Force with their unique role, and brings significant combat multipliers to the team. The most impressive challenge this community has faced and overcome is the synchronization of its efforts. We have met this challenge through open, honest and frequent communication.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the extensive support we receive from our contractors and the



Lt. Col. Allen Ponsini

local nationals hired under those contracts. These personnel perform services that would otherwise take Soldiers away from patrols and direct action missions.

The TF Associator team has been very successful. Many of our direct action missions are a result of intelligence gathered from general support assets. We would be unable to accomplish many of our missions – the MEDCAPS, radio shows, TV shows, returns support – without help from Med Falcon, Psyops, THTs, and CA.

Our challenges in sector and on camp have been great, however, as a community we have excelled. Those of us on Camp Monteith have grown to appreciate what we have and recognize how important each piece is to contributing to the whole.

And I, as the leader of that community, thank each for making their contribution matter.

SEE THE PHOTO OF THE DAY

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Submissions or story ideas related to the MNB(E) mission are encouraged. Send regular mail to MNB(E) PAO, Attn: Editor, Camp Bondsteel, APO AE 09340; send e-mail to guardianeast@bondsteel2areur.army.mil.

COVER: Staff Sgt. William Miller, an aircraft armament electrical systems specialist with Delta Company, 1-151st Aviation, loads rockets into an AH-64 Apache Attack Helicopter. Photo by Spc. Luke Rollins.

See Page 14 for the story

Guardian East

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Archeology

Infantry Soldiers dig up Kosovo's past and explore its history.

4

One Lone Marine

Staff Sgt. Latricia Young talks about what it is like being the only Marine on Camp Bondsteel.

6

The Story of Two Little Bears

KFOR takes care of Bubble and Trouble, two orphaned bear cubs.

8

Feature Photo

POLUKRBAT lends a helping hand to the people of Krivenik during a MEDCAP.

10

Working Together

Multi-national mass casualty exercise takes place north of Kosovska Mitrovica/ Mitrovica.

12

Cover Story

Apache ground crews keep the helicopters in flight.

14

Lithuanian Doctor, 1st Lt. Bogdan Sajenchyk of the Polish-Ukrainian Battalion, checks the blood pressure of a patient in the Ilaz Thaci School in Krivenik. The POLUKRBAT recently held a Medical and Dental Civilian Assistance Program in the school to help the people of the village. Photo by Spc. Rob Barker. See page 10 for the story.

ARCHEOLOGY 101

Story and photo by Sgt. Jon Soucy

Being an archeologist is a lot like being an infantryman, according to Spc. James H. Kompanek, an infantryman with Charlie Company, 1-110th Infantry.

"Well, you have to know land nav, you dig holes and you work outside," said Kompanek describing the similarities of the two. And while in Kosovo, Kompanek is getting the opportunity to experience being both an infantryman and an archeologist.

The State College, Pa., native, who holds a bachelor's degree in anthropology from the University of Pittsburgh, along with Spc. Chris S. Houlihan, an infantryman with the same unit, recently completed preliminary sketches and mapping of the remains of what may be a church on a hilltop near Donja Budriga/ Budzike e Poshtem.

The remains at the site are very similar to remains that are next to a church in Cernice/ Cernica, said Kompanek. In addition, a cemetery adjacent to the site strengthens Kompanek's belief that the structural remains were once used for religious purposes.

"The similarities between this foundation and that of the one in Cernica, and the fact that the cemetery is so close – that's why I think that this used to be a church," said Kompanek.

He also believes the site has a deeper history and the area was used for other purposes.

"There is domestic evidence here," said Kompanek holding up a pottery shard. "People usually don't live in religious structures. I think that there is something under the foundation."

Kompanek and Houlihan first discovered the site in August while exploring the area during a patrol. Kompanek wanted to perform an initial archeological survey of the site, which includes making sketches and mapping the locations of items within the site. Photographs are also taken and the area around the site is searched for other surface clues to the structure's use and the people who used it.

"It's always fascinated me. You get to learn about the past and find out more than just what is seen at first glance."

*-Spc. Chris S. Houlihan,
an infantryman with
Charlie Company,
1-110th Infantry-*

After running his proposal through his chain of command, Kompanek was given approval. For Houlihan, who assisted Kompanek with the initial mapping of the site, it was a chance to get reacquainted with working on an archeological site.

"I haven't been on a formal archeological site in about four years," said Houlihan, who minored in archeology. "It's always fascinated me. You get to learn about the past and find out more than just what is seen at first glance."

And Kompanek had similar feelings.

"It's an unbiased account," said Kompanek. "It's what's there. You can tell the age, what they did, their nutrition, how they lived and you can piece together certain events."

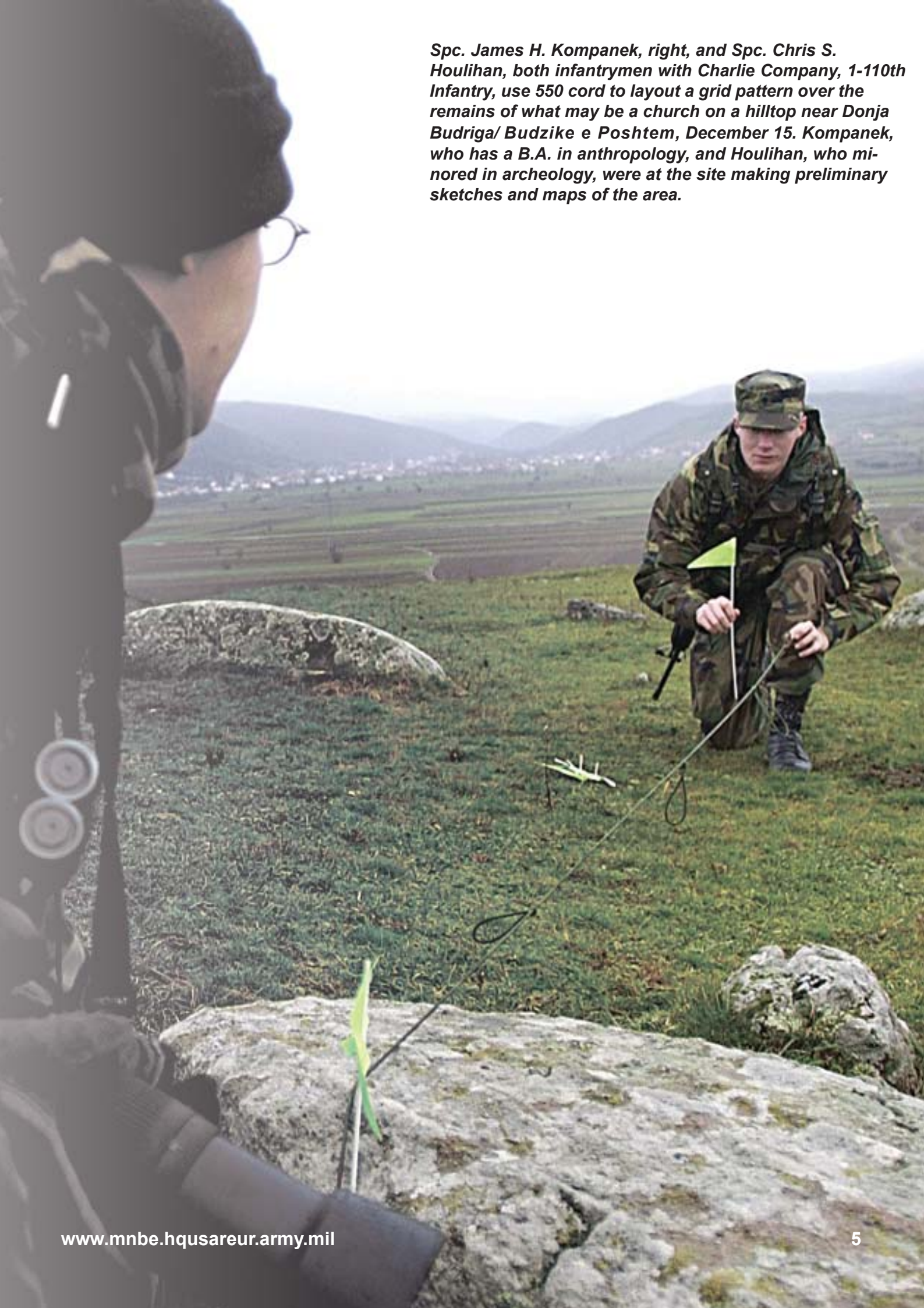
And now that the initial survey has been completed, Kompanek intends to do more research on the area.

"That's where you spend most of your time," said Kompanek. "Looking things up and doing research."

But for Kompanek, the chance to research the site should help him with his future plans.

"I plan on going to grad school," said Kompanek. "Hopefully, this will help me out."

Spc. James H. Kompanek, right, and Spc. Chris S. Houlihan, both infantrymen with Charlie Company, 1-110th Infantry, use 550 cord to layout a grid pattern over the remains of what may be a church on a hilltop near Donja Budriga/ Budzike e Poshtem, December 15. Kompanek, who has a B.A. in anthropology, and Houlihan, who minored in archeology, were at the site making preliminary sketches and maps of the area.



Marine Corps

~~**ARMY**~~



OF ONE



Story and photo by Spc. Sean McCollum

At first glance, the desk of Staff Sgt. Latricia Young of the Joint Contracting Command is like any other desk in the camp. She wears a camouflage uniform and decorates the walls of her office with posters and bumper stickers. The only difference is the camouflage is pixilated, the boots are brown, the posters sport a red globe with an eagle perched atop, and the stickers say Semper Fi – Latin for “Always Faithful” and the motto of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Young is the sole occupier of a one-Marine billet here on Camp Bondsteel, and assigned to the JCC for a six month tour.

“My job here is as an advisor to the ASG [Area Support Group] and to the task force,” Young said of her duties. “We try to purchase locally to put some money back into the economy here in Kosovo.” The JCC, she said, also awards the 17 nonpersonal services contracts that keep the local population employed on the camp.

“We have put a lot of money into the economy and we go to the outside – Gjilan, Ferizaj, Prishtina – to find a company first before we go and get it online back in the States.”

Young is an 11-year-veteran of the Corps, having joined through the delayed entry program at age 17.

“I wanted to be in the Marine Corps since I was a little kid and I was living in Washington, D.C.,” Young said. She tried to join a Young Marines program, but it was difficult to attend the meetings since her mother was a single parent, she said. Her mother did the next best thing, though, and signed the paperwork for her daughter to join the actual Corps as soon as possible.

So far her journey has taken her to many places including California, Japan and Virginia. After her tour in Kosovo is over, she will return to Camp Pendleton, N.C.

“I love it,” said Young of her career choice. “I wouldn’t do anything different. There are people in my family who have been in other branches of service, but I’m the only Marine in my family.”

Being the only Marine has stretched from her family life into her professional life as she works beside the other branches of service. That doesn’t seem to bother Young. The quality of people, she said, makes the most difference.

“On this camp there are a lot of good people here. So the people you meet makes a world of difference. So my time here has been wonderful,” she said. “I work with a lot of great people and you couldn’t ask for anything more.”

As for the job itself, Young said it comes easily since she’s been training for it for more than half her military career.

“This is the job that I’ve been in for seven years. So it’s not like I have to go to some kind of training to come here. This is the job I do in the States, so it’s no different.”

KFOR and the Two Little Bears

Story by Staff Sgt. Michael Minardi and
Sgt. 1st Class Robert Bishop

Once upon a time there were two little bears named Trouble and Bubble. They were fuzzy, playful and, because of their youth, still small in bear terms – about the size of full-grown St. Bernard dogs. And they loved to play with the KFOR soldiers who made regular visits just to see them.

Although the bears seemed happy and the soldiers enjoyed their games, one soldier, Austrian Army Maj. Stefan Ratzenberger, internal information chief in the Press Information Office at KFOR Headquarters and latest in a line of guardians of the little cubs, knew Trouble and Bubble would have to find a home where they could grow to be normal bears.

According to Ratzenberger, the search for a suitable home for the 10-month-old brown bear cubs began the day a hunter, who had killed their mother in a forest near the border of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, delivered the orphans to Clay Yoxtheimer, a U.S. civilian working in Kosovo for Dynacorp. Like the hunter, Yoxtheimer knew the cubs wouldn't survive long in the wild on their own, so he agreed to take them in and he kept them in his garage for several months.

Then one day, Ratzenberger said, Norwegian Army Lt. Col. Tore S. Bade visited his friend, Yoxtheimer, and discovered the little bears living in the garage. Knowing a garage was not the natural habitat of bears, Bade offered to take the two for a little exercise in a nearby training area, beginning a Sunday tradition of taking them out to play.

Yoxtheimer knew he couldn't keep the bears in his garage forever, not only because of their health, but also because he was missing more and more time at work to stay home with them. He knew he had to find a new place for them to live.

"Clay's original idea was to get the bears out of Kosovo," said Ratzenberger. "We have been looking for an ideal place outside Kosovo since the bears lived in the garage."

(See *BEARS* page 19)





Bear cub "Bubble" jumps up for a morsel from Thomaso Piccinino, who works with the Italian cable team at Joint Command South, during a Sunday outing with KFOR troops in Kosovo. Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Minardi.

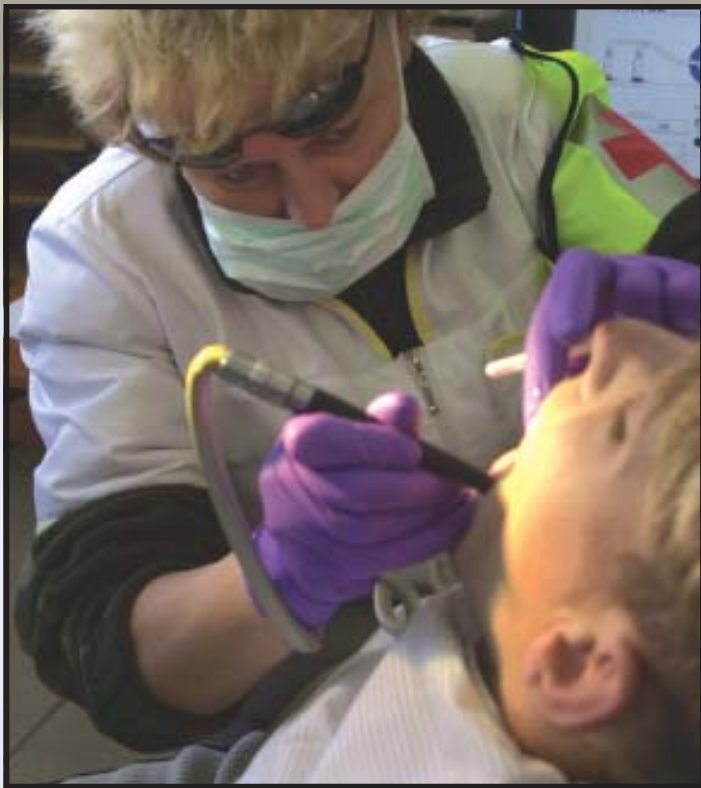
Pulling teeth

Medical and Dental Civilian Assistance Programs can be challenging at times, but soldiers of the Polish-Ukrainian Battalion use their hard-earned skills to help the people of Krivenik, a small village in Kosovo.

Story and photos by Spc. Rob Barker

The school's entrance was congested with children, teachers and parents. They were not there for a class or a meeting but to get medical and dental support for their pains and illnesses.

Their health rested in the hands of the Polish-



Polish-Ukrainian Battalion Dentist, Capt. Iwona Chmielewska, works on the teeth of a patient in the Ilaz Thaci School in Krivenik. The POLUKRBAT recently held a Medical and Dental Civilian Assistance program in the school to help the people of the village.

Ukrainian Battalion during a recent Medical and Dental Civilian Assistance Program held at the Ilaz Thaci primary school in Krivenik. Healthcare personnel of the battalion visited the school located in the Ukrainian sector of Multi-national Brigade (East) in hopes of healing the sick and injured of the approximately 250-person village.

"I will do as much as possible to help the people of Kosovo," said Polish Army Capt. Iwona Chmielewska, a dentist with the POLUKRBAT. "The people of this village need a lot of help in dentistry, and I am here for them."

"It may only be a drop in the sea of help that they need," said Capt. Mania Bartosz, a Polish doctor with the battalion, "but I will do my part to make them feel healthy."

Choosing a town where the MEDCAP would be held was not an easy job with so many needs in Kosovo.

"Before a MEDCAP, we choose the village with the majority of health problems and the lack of medications and the longest distance to the nearest hospital," said Capt. Jacek Mazur, press officer with the battalion.

"This is the only time for these people to get the healthcare they need," said Bartosz. "They do not have an easy way to get to the doctors and I'm very sympathetic to that. I am using this time to give them advice on what to do, and what not to do while they are sick, and give them the medicine they need to get better."

This is only one of the many times that the unit's members will go out during their ten-month rotation here, Bartosz said, even though it is difficult to find time with only one Polish dentist and three Polish doctors on Camp White Eagle.

"We love to help people as well as doing our jobs," said Chmielewska. "We will keep doing our part and help the people of Kosovo, for as long as we are here."

Polish-Ukranian Battalion Dentist, Capt. Iwona Chmielewska, works on the teeth of a patient in the Ilaz Thaci School in Krivenik. The POLUKRBAT recently held a Medical and Dental Civilian Assistance program in the school to help the people of the village.



Working

Multi-national soldiers participate in a mass casualty exercise and enhance their skills.



Together

Story and photos by Spc. Tim Grooms

A frigid wind blew past the barren mountainside on the north side of Kosovska Mitrovica/ Mitrovice. American and Danish soldiers stood huddled near each other, some wrapped in blankets, in an attempt to keep warm. Snow flurries dancing around the sky at Camp Olaf

Rye were a precursor of the day ahead for the troops waiting to play out a multi-national mass-casualty exercise.

The exercise was a chance for medical staff to improve their skills and practice what they would do if there were a large number of soldiers or civilians injured in an area, and American, Danish and French personnel worked together to take care of the simulated casualties.

The event required a lot of people to act as injured patients for the medical staff.

"It was wonderful to be in the process for the mass-casualty exercise," said Sgt. Stephanie Flitter, one of the exercise's "casualties" and a Task Force Medical Falcon preventive medicine non-commissioned officer. "I enjoyed witnessing how each operation worked with each other — from triage on site to the hospital here."

Exercises like this one demand great coordination when only one nationality is involved, and the need becomes greater when the exercise turns multi-national.

"Dealing with multiple countries requires large amounts of planning and preparation," said Maj. Lynn Heng, commander of the 24th Medical Company (Air Ambulance). "You need to make sure everyone up the chain of command with each country involved understands the exercise in its entirety."

While preparing for the exercise, it is also important not to give too much away so the participants don't know what scenarios to expect.

"We try to keep a controlled chaos out there and let the soldiers know what to expect, but not give away everything and ruin the surprise element," said Heng.

The ability to work in a multi-national setting gives Soldiers the chance to learn how other countries do things.

"We are very fortunate to be able to work with many different nations," said Meyers. "Every country does things a little bit different. It's nice to learn how they do things, so we know."

(See *MASCAL* page 21)



Keeping them flying

Story and photos by Spc. Luke Rollins

The AH-64 Apache Attack Helicopter is to Aviation what the M1A1 Abrams Battle Tank is to Armor, what the M109A6 Paladin Howitzer is to Artillery, or what the M2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle is to the Infantry. It is both the chariot that carries modern-day warriors into battle, and the weapon with which the warriors arm themselves. The Apache, however, would be as useless on today's battlefield as the spears and horses of old would if it weren't for the tireless efforts of aviation's unsung heroes: the ground crew.

(See APACHE page 16)



Ground crew members of Charlie and Delta Companies, 1-151st Aviation move an AH-64 Apache Attach Helicopter from inside a "Clam Shell" to the flightline.

Sgt. Brad Barrett, an aircraft armament electrical systems specialist with Delta Company, 1-151st Aviation, sits in the gunner seat of an AH-64 Apache Attack Helicopter and inspects the Target Acquisition Designation System and Pilot Night Vision System after making repairs to them.



(APACHE from page 14)

They are mechanics, crew chiefs, and armament specialists. Their job, simply stated, is to keep the Apaches flying.

"I just really like the challenges [my job] brings," said Sgt. 1st Class Bruce Langenhuizen, an armament platoon sergeant with Delta Company, 1-151st Aviation.

"The aircraft is more of a challenge to me," said Sgt. Brad Barrett, an aircraft armament electrical systems specialist with the same unit. "I always want to try and get in there and figure out a problem."

The job is more than just a chance for Soldiers to explore new challenges. The ground crews have to work as a team to keep the Apaches in tip-top shape.

"That's my baby," Langenhuizen said with a smile about the Apaches. "Every one of the aircraft we have is mine. I believe everyone in our unit has that feeling. If one aircraft has a little problem, it's everyone's problem, and that's how we all feel."

The sense of teamwork amongst the ground crew members extends to the pilots and gunners of the battalion as well.

"We like to consider ourselves all one big team," said Sgt. Brady Perdue, an aircraft armament electrical systems specialist with Delta



Spc. Luke Johnson, an aircraft armament electrical systems specialist with Delta Company, 1-151st Aviation, replaces a part of an AH-64 Apache Attack Helicopter's Target Acquisition Designation System and Pilot Night Vision System.

“If one aircraft has a little problem, it’s everyone’s problem, and that’s how we all feel.”

***-Sgt. 1st Class
Bruce Langenhuizen, an
armament platoon sergeant with
Delta Company, 1-151st Aviation-***



Sgt. Scott Scalp, an aircraft armament electrical systems specialist with Charlie Company, 1-151st Aviation, replaces a part on an AH-64 Apache Attack Helicopters Target Acquisition Designation System and Pilot Night Vision System.

Company. “We like to trust each other. If we can’t trust each other, then there’s two lives at stake.”

Teamwork is crucial to the success of the mission, but so is the experience and knowledge that comes with working on the Apaches.

“You pretty much know the little quirks of each aircraft,” said Staff Sgt. George Folk, an Apache mechanic with Charlie Company. “Each one of them has their own attitude, I guess you’d say. You kind of learn them over the years. You know what makes it tick.”

Folk also said having that knowledge is key to ensuring mission success.

“[The best part of my job is] being able to work on these aircraft, watch them go fly, do what they do, and come back safely,” said Folk.

As their rotation in Kosovo draws to a close, the ground crews will be taking home more than just souvenirs.

“We’re a lot better off now than we were when we got here,” said Sgt. 1st Class Don Dingeldein, a platoon sergeant with Charlie Company. “We’ve had the time to train up on a lot more tasks. Everybody’s a lot better off than they were when we got here five months ago.”



Staff Sgt. William Miller, an aircraft armament electrical systems specialist with Delta Company, 1-151st Aviation, loads rockets into an AH-64 Apache Attack Helicopter.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Minardi

The Children's Song

Story by Maj. John E. Moran IV

In a display of enthusiasm and gratitude, the "Happy Voices" choir opened their performance and their hearts to Soldiers at the Camp Bondsteel theater. On Dec. 14, thirty-seven children from the Pristina/Prishtina area, dressed in matching colorful plaid outfits and yellow shirts, came to express thanks to the KFOR troops stationed at the Camp. At the direction of Arjecta Daci, the children's choir director, the group performed many holiday songs including American favorites such as "Silent Night" and "Jingle Bells".

This performance may not have been possible just a few years ago. The well-established children's choir was disbanded in 1994 due to political tensions in the region, but was reformed 18 months ago with partial funding by the American Office in Prishtina/Prishtina. Even with that help, the performance wouldn't have been possible without the 448th Civil Affairs Battalion working with the local communities to provide talented children for the choir, the Camp

Bondsteel Morale, Welfare and Recreation personnel coordinating the effort to draw an audience, or the more stable and secure area all the soldiers of KFOR have helped provide.

The concert included a special surprise for Spc. Josh Buchanon, an infantryman with Alpha Company, 1-112th Infantry, and Maj. Warren Schwartz, the Area Support Group legal advisor. The Soldiers were called to the stage and the children presented them with gifts celebrating their birthdays – Dec. 13 for Buchanon and Dec. 14 for Schwartz. Then the choir sang "Happy Birthday", which they had practiced especially for that performance, to the surprised guests of honor.

In a carefully written speech, Dea Mulolli, a member of the choir, expressed the group's appreciation of both KFOR and the American Soldiers.

"Your presence in Kosovo has revived our life," she said. "The hard times have ended and now we're growing up, playing, learning, and singing in freedom."



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Minardi

Upper left: Children of the choir sing "Silent Night" in English during the concert.

Upper right: Dea Mulolli gives Spc. Josh Buchanan, an infantryman with Alpha Company, 1-112th, a birthday gift. Buchanan's birthday was the day prior to the event.

Bottom: Dea Mulolli gives a speech thanking KFOR prior to the concert.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Minardi

(BEARS from page 8)

When Yoxtheimer heard a restaurant was opening in Pristina that would have a small zoo incorporated into its garden, he asked the owner to temporarily house the cubs, Ratzenberger said. The owner, who already had two bears in his miniature zoo, agreed and Trouble and Bubble moved into a comfy habitat made to resemble caves and feel more like home.

Meanwhile, the Sunday exercise trips were taken over by German Army Master Sgt. Juergen Hingst, and eventually Ratzenberger took charge of the weekend outings when Hingst returned to Germany.

Ratzenberger also took up the quest to find a permanent home for the cubs, he said, and when speaking with Alexander Bayerl, the head of the Austrian Office in Kosovo, Ratzenberger thought he had an answer.

Bayerl, who was interested in brown bears even before he met Trouble and Bubble, said he had contacts in the Gamlitz game preserve in southern Austria, so he contacted the preserve and they agreed to take in the little bears. The only challenge that remained was to find a way to get them there.

Ratzenberg appealed for help from Vienna and found that the Defense Minister of Austria, Guenther Platter, was willing to help. There's a regular supply flight from Austria to Pristina, and it seemed to Ratzenberg that the bears could take the return trip to a new home.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Minardi

U.S. Air Force Tech Sgt. Becky S. Blakey, of the KFOR Headquarters Support Group, plays with bear cub "Trouble" during an outing with soldiers near the Slatina Airport in Pristina/ Prishtina.

"I gave the order to the Austrian Air Force to organize everything to get the bears out of Kosovo as soon as possible," Platter said.

Trouble and Bubble won't be leaving for their new Austrian home for another few months, Ratzenberger said, giving the soldiers who have grown to love them a little more time to play. He said he will miss them both, but that he's happy they will be somewhere they can grow to be normal bears.

"I decided that I would like to be the one who takes care of the bears," he said. "I love animals."

And all the people who have played with and watched over the two little bears hope that when the cubs get to their new home, they'll live happily ever after.

SOUL FOOD: MESSAGE FROM THE CHAPLAIN

***“Words like...religious and
irreligious, insider and
outsider, uncivilized and
uncouth, slave and free,
mean nothing. From now
on everyone is identified by
Christ, everyone is
included in Christ.”***

***From Colossians 3:11 –
The Message***



Chaplain (Capt.) Scot McCosh

**By Chaplain
(Capt.) Scot McCosh**

It was the night of 20 January, 2003 and we had gathered in the armory for our first Task Force Command and Staff meeting. Our units from across the state were connected on a conference call and we were beginning to plan for the year ahead. It also happened to be Martin Luther King, JR. Day. As I reflected upon our task ahead, to serve as a peace-enforcement force in Kosovo, it all seemed fitting. On a day set aside to honor a man that had a vision of equality and peace, we were preparing for a mission that was seeking to bring that vision to Kosovo.

It is time to celebrate Martin Luther King, JR. Day again, a time to focus on our “dreams.” Last year we dreamt of the excitement that we hoped awaited us in Kosovo, an opportunity to change the world. This year, most of us dream of going home and being reunited with those we love. What a wonderful dream it is! It will soon be a reality. Life, for most, will return to “normal” and the past year will become a conversation piece. Yet, I hope that the past year of challenges will grow, in each one of us, a dream that lasts long beyond this deployment. A dream that goes beyond returning to comforts but rather calls us to compassion. I hope and pray that God plants in each of us a dream

that will transform us. A dream that, with God’s help, will foster peace, unity, love and hope for our own nation, for places like Kosovo and for our world. In a world full of chaos and contention, terrorism and turmoil, war and woes, we need a dream! Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, JR said it best:

I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: “We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal.”

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave-owners will be able to sit down together at a table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a desert state, sweltering with the heat of injustice and oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today.

These words, delivered on 28 August 1963, still challenge us today. Yes, we’ve made great

strides in our own nation, but now we must seek to live out this dream in our larger world.

For the past year, the sacrifices that the soldiers and families of KFOR 5A have made, have helped this dream to be shared in a land still recovering from war and torn by hatred. For that we can be proud. From that we can learn.

It’s been a long year, but I hope that you can claim with Dr. King, “I have a dream today.” God tells us that no matter who we are or where we have come from or what we have been through, He has a dream for us; A dream for us to know His love, His grace, His mercy, His hope, His peace and His eternal life. Jesus said, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” (Matthew 11:28-29)

Live the dream! Accept God’s invitation. Live the dream! Keep in touch with a school in Kosovo. Live the dream! Volunteer at your child’s school. Live the dream! Attend worship at a church of another ethnicity. Live the dream! Keep your family support group going. Live the dream! Write to soldiers that are still deployed. Live the dream! Pray for God’s peace. Live the dream!

Griffin Hill Dining Facility wins USAREUR award

#1



Photo by Spc. Tim Grooms

From left to right: Vezir Limani, kitchen supervisor, Samedin Rafizi, head count supervisor, Vlora Kupina, facility manager, and Col. McKinley Collins, Area Support Group commander, pose with the first place trophy that was awarded to Griffin Hill for excellence in small category dining facility.

The Camp Monteith Dining Facility was also recognized as runner-up in the large category dining facility. The Philip A. Connely awards are given as part of a U.S. Army Europe level competition for dining facilities.

"The Brown and Root Food Services Staffs deserve special recognition for their contributions in improving USAREUR Food Service Program," said Jimmy White, installation food advisor.

"Their superior efforts enhanced the quality of food service provided to our soldiers and civilians. Participants should be congratulated for their outstanding efforts and fine performance in this year's competition."

(MASCAL from page 13)

Although there are language barriers between the people of the different nations, they are able to effectively work together.

"We make it work and have in the past. The language barrier is not as bad as [you] think," said Meyers.

Once away from the town and on the mountain, the weather cleared, but the winds increased and the temperature lowered. The cold can make life a bit harder on the medics and people involved.

"The temperature seriously derogates [detracts from] everything. A person's core temperature lowers, [and they] lose dexterity and feeling," said Staff Sgt. James Young, a flight medic with the company. Also, the patient is usually wearing more clothing in the frigid air, which can hinder the process of getting to wounds, Young said. "It's hard starting [intravenous injections] because the body starts sending blood to the center of the body, and

veins get smaller."

"I don't like the cold," said Spc. Kristina Gendreau, a TFMF preventive medicine specialist. "It's harder to concentrate on my role [in the exercise] because of the cold."

Yet, there are the one or two that enjoy the frigid air.

"It does affect me, but I love it," said Flitter, a native of Minnesota, who is used to cold winters.

The cold added a factor of realism to the exercise – just as the fake wounds and multi-national cooperation did. And all this work was for one reason.

"We prepare for the real world in case this does happen," said Heng.



Sgt. Kelly Meyers, a flight medic with 24th Medical Company (Air Ambulance), grips an intravenous injection bag as he prepares to simulate administering it during a recent mass casualty exercise.

Online computer training to replace most classrooms

Training now available while deployed, mentors on the web 24 hours a day

HEIDELBERG, Germany – Computer training has entered the computer age in Europe, with the advancement of the Army's e-Learning initiative, a web-based training system offering nearly 1,500 courses to all active-duty Soldiers, National Guardsmen, Reserves, and DA civilians, free of charge.

A tour of the new system is online at <https://www.us.army.mil/portal/jhtml/tour/content/coursemap.html>.

Registration is through <https://www.atrrs.army.mil/channels/eLearning/smartforce>, users must have an Army Knowledge Online account in order to register.

The MySmartForce computer-based training initiative will be the Army's primary method of providing both an individual's initial information technology skills as well as the subsequent maintenance of those skills.

The intent is to provide a wide range of courses for organizational and mission-related IT training requirements, as well as for an individual's personal goals. The initiative will be centrally funded to ensure there is no cost to the individual or their organization for utilization of the Army-provided vendor courses and products.

Guidance for commanders and supervisors will be to ensure access during duty hours for organization and mission related training and encourage employee self-development by learning additional skills.

The MySmartForce system is available to all Soldiers, DA Civilians, and ROTC cadets anytime, anywhere there is an internet connection. This flexibility is one of the major advantages. Others include:

- College credits
- Promotion points (one for every five hours of training)
- Novice to Expert-level training
- Large technical library
- On-line meeting rooms and student chat rooms
- On-line subject matter experts and mentors are available 24/7
- Cisco, Oracle, Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer, and Information Systems Security certification available

USAREUR, in line with this new initiative, will be reducing or eliminating many of the classroom-based instruction sessions, saving travel funds, especially for units from smaller communities.

Step one for registering is to log on to: <https://www.atrrs.army.mil/channels/eLearning/smartforce>. Next, read the directions and click on "ATRRS Application" or "Register for MySmartForce."

Read the eligibility requirements and click on "continue." If you are not eligible, the system will not allow you to register. On the next screen enter your AKO username and password, and click "submit."

Once the system accepts your registration you will receive two emails on your AKO account. One has your MySmartForce login id and the address you will use to logon to MySmartForce, the second e-mail will contain your password.

Next download and review the MySmartForce Step-by-step guide. When logging on for the first time, it is recommended that you take the website tour.

Over 100,000 students are already enrolled, according to the Army e-Learning office, for assistance with registration or any other difficulty; call 001-800-275-2872, or e-mail help@atssc.army.mil.

Time names 'American Soldier' as Person of the Year



WASHINGTON (Army News Service, Dec. 23, 2003) – For the second time since it started conferring the honor in 1927, Time magazine has selected the American Soldier as its Person of the Year.

Time announced its 2003 choice Dec. 21. The American Soldier was first selected as Time's Person of the Year during the Korean War in 1950.

"Look at the covers (of Time) for the past year and you will see that one-third of them have to do with the war in Iraq," said Mark Thompson, Time's Pentagon correspondent. "Our editors looked at the key figures of the war – Saddam, Bush, Rumsfeld – and decided they didn't quite fit. The American Soldier did."

Time traditionally selects the person or persons that have been centrally involved in the major history-making issues of the year for the honor, Thompson said. Not all past winners were picked for being good people – Adolf Hitler, 1938; Josef Stalin, 1939 and 1949; and Ayatollah Khomeini, 1979, for example.

The editorial article that justifies Time's selection, Dec. 29, 2003 – Jan. 5, 2004 issue, praises Soldiers.

"For uncommon skills and service, for the choices each one of them has made and the ones still ahead, for the challenge of defending not only our freedoms but those barely stirring half a world away, the American Soldier is Time's Person of the Year," stated the article.

While praising Soldiers, the editorial makes a break of Soldiers' actions with those of the administration. It questions the international policy decisions of its 2000 Person of the Year, President George W. Bush.

"The unstated promise is that soldiers are sent to war only as a last resort, to defend their country from harm," the editorial asserted. "But while the threat posed by Saddam was chief among the stated justifications, George W. Bush's war was always about more than the weapons that have yet to be found."

SOLDIER

SECTION Q N' A:

Who has most influenced you over your military career?

Sgt. Kimberly Weaver

"My family, because many of them are prior service. They influenced me to join the military."



Photo by Spc. Tim Grooms

Sgt. Kimberly Weaver, the Task Force Medical Falcon physical therapy non-commissioned officer in charge, prepares her patient for a medication treatment to his knee. Weaver is from North Ridgeville, Ohio.

"Master Sgt. Pressley influenced me the most over the years. He is an outstanding NCO who takes care of soldiers and tries to help them out any way he can. He has influenced me to continue in the Army."

Spc. Luis R. Mejias



Photo by Spc. Tim Grooms

Spc. Luis R. Mejias, a unit mail clerk with HHC 56th Brigade, files incoming mail to be handed out to the Soldiers at Camp Bondsteel.

Sgt. Jeffrey Gittemeier



Photo by Spc. Sean McCollum

"The biggest influence on my military career has been my father, Master Sergeant John Gittemeier. He helps me see the light when things get dark."

Sgt. Jeff Gittemeier, a military policeman with the 1137th MP Company, gives Zoran Krcmarevic, the community officer of the town of Vrbovac/ Vrboc, clothes donated by the post office Gittemeier works for in the civilian world.

Sgt. Paul Swanson



Photo by Sgt. Jon Soucy

Sgt. Paul Swanson, an infantryman with Charlie Company, 1-112th Infantry, shares candy and other treats with children in the Hashan area. The unit was in the area distributing donated clothing and other items to area residents as well as conducting a routine presence patrol.

"My father was the biggest influence on me joining the military, but he thinks I should join the Air Force instead of the infantry. Also, I'd have to say almost all the NCOs I've served under, all of them. I've learned something from coming up through the ranks. I can't single out one person."

Scenes of Kosovo

Members of 448th Civil Affairs Battalion splash through a stream along the way to the village of Burnik/ Burnnik. Photo by Spc. Tim Grooms.

